

LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES USED BY
ENGLISH LANGUAGE MAJORS

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ABSTRACT

Various researches revealed language learners' preferences on language learning strategies vary due to a few reasons. However, studies on how good language learners usually learn and practise the target language will provide new perspectives for the current trends and developments of language learning and teaching (Lightbown & Spada, 2006), especially among those majoring in English language. Thus, this small-scale study aims to investigate how the undergraduates majoring in English language and Linguistics at University of Malaya employ language learning strategies to enhance their English language efficiently. Quantitative and qualitative research designs were used to identify the learners' preferences on types of strategies, frequency of usage and in what ways the preferred language learning strategies among the learners vary with their programme year of study. Using Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory of Language Learning (SILL) Version 7, the quantitative data were analysed in the form of average scores and percentages. Categorization and thematic analysis were used to analyse the qualitative data retrieved from the interview. The findings revealed that majority of the learners prefer social and metacognitive strategies more than other types of language learning strategies. They were indeed frequent users of strategies and this finding also was reflected in their results of self-rating on proficiency level. The participants from each year of study were found to have similar patterns on the preferred types of strategies and how they go about learning the language. This research contributes perspectives about strategies in language learning and awareness about the effectiveness of using strategies that can be considered as pertinent to develop learners' achievements in language learning as well as its implications toward the educators, syllabus designers and researchers.

Abstrak

Pelbagai kajian mendapati kecenderungan para pelajar bahasa dalam penggunaan strategi pembelajaran bahasa adalah berbeza disebabkan oleh beberapa faktor. Namun, kajian-kajian mengenai bagaimana pelajar bahasa yang bagus selalu belajar dalam mempraktikkan sesuatu bahasa yang dipelajari akan lebih memberi perspektif baharu seiring dengan cara terkini serta perkembangan terhadap pembelajaran dan pengajaran bahasa, terutamanya bagi mereka yang mengambil pengkhususan dalam bidang Bahasa Inggeris (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Maka, kajian skala-kecil ini telah dijalankan untuk mengenalpasti bagaimana para pelajar Ijazah Dasar dalam pengkhususan Bahasa Inggeris dan Linguistik di Universiti Malaya menggunakan strategi – strategi pembelajaran dalam meningkatkan penguasaan Bahasa Inggeris mereka secara berkesan. Kaedah kajian kuantitatif dan kualitatif telah digunakan bagi mengenalpasti jenis-jenis strategi yang digemari, kekerapan penggunaan dan kecenderungan dalam pemilihan strategi pembelajaran bahasa berpandukan tahun pembelajaran mereka. Dengan menggunakan senarai soalan kaji selidik strategi pembelajaran bahasa yang diperkenalkan oleh Oxford (1990) Versi 7, data kuantitatif telah dianalisis melalui nilai kiraan purata dan peratusan. Analisis secara kategori dan tema telah digunakan untuk menganalisis data kualitatif yang diperolehi melalui kaedah temu bual. Keputusan kajian mendapati sebilangan besar daripada kalangan pelajar lebih cenderung menggunakan strategi secara sosial dan metakognitif berbanding jenis-jenis strategi pembelajaran yang lain. Mereka juga adalah pengguna strategi yang kerap dan hasil kajian ini telah dibuktikan melalui keputusan mereka dalam menilai tahap kecekapan Bahasa Inggeris. Peserta kajian yang mewakili setiap tahun pembelajaran juga didapati cenderung ke arah penggunaan sesuatu strategi pembelajaran bahasa dan cara pembelajaran yang sama. Kajian ini memberi perspektif mengenai strategi dalam

pembelajaran bahasa dan kesadaran mengenai keberkesanan dalam penggunaan strategi-strategi yang boleh dianggap sebagai penting dalam meningkatkan pencapaian dan prestasi dikalangan pelajar dalam mempelajari sesuatu bahasa serta implikasi kajian terhadap para akademik, pereka sukatan pelajaran dan penyelidik secara amnya.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ELT	English language Teaching
LLS	Language Learning Strategies
MUET	Malaysian University English Test
SILL	Strategy Inventory Language Learning
SPM	Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia

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